

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 61

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to honor the Criminal Court of Knox County on the occasion of its 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to recognize the individual components of our court system that bring to justice those who transgress against the laws of the State of Tennessee, ensuring a fair and orderly society; and

WHEREAS, this year marks the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Criminal Court of Knox County; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 1 of the Acts of 1907 established a "Judge of the Criminal Court of Knox County," initially appointed by the governor, and then popularly elected for the first time in 1910 to an eight-year term; this new judge alternated with the circuit judge hearing the circuit docket; and

WHEREAS, this same act established a Clerk of the Criminal Court; the initial clerk was the existing clerk of the "Criminal Branch" of the Circuit Court Additional Criminal Divisions; and

WHEREAS, the distinguished jurists who have served Division I of the Criminal Court of Knox County are Judge T.A.R. Nelson, Jr., (1908-1926); Judge E.G. Stooksbury (1926-1942); Judge J. Fred Bibb (1942-1966); Judge Joe D. Duncan (1966-1975); Judge Joe Nigro (appointed 1-24-1975-1980); Judge John J. Duncan, Jr., (appointed 1-6-1981-6-10-1988); Judge Randy Nichols (appointed 6-15-1988-8-18-1992); and Judge Richard Baumgartner (appointed 8-18-1992-present); and

WHEREAS, Division II of the Criminal Court of Knox County was created by the Public Acts of 1970, Chapter 364, sixty-three years after the court was initially created; the first judge was not appointed by the governor but was instead elected by the voters in August 1970 and then stood for election to a full eight-year term in 1974; and

WHEREAS, the devoted judges who have served Division II of the Criminal Court of Knox County are Judge Richard Ray Ford (1970-1982); Judge Ray Lee Jenkins (1982-2007); Judge Ken Irvine (appointed 8-20-2007-2008); and Judge Bobby Ray McGee (2008-present); and

WHEREAS, Division III of the Criminal Court of Knox County was created by the Public Acts of 1976, Chapter 518, which provided that the initial judge would be elected in August 1976 and then stand for election to an eight-year term in 1982; this act is unusual in that it specifies that the judge has the power to appoint a secretary and court reporter for the court; and

WHEREAS, the defenders of justice who have served Division III of the Criminal Court of Knox County are Judge George Balitsaris (1976-1990) and Judge Mary Beth Leibowitz (appointed 1989-present); and

WHEREAS, the jurists, officers, and staff who have served the Criminal Court of Knox County during the past 110 years are to be commended for their commitment to justice and impartiality under the law; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that on the occasion of the court's 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we honor and commend the jurists, officers, and staff of the Criminal Court of Knox County for their devoted service to handing down justice in their community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.